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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

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Labour Conference Special

The Editor
Whither Labour?

Richard Briginshaw
Trade Unions and the Labour Party

Alex Eadie MP & G. Schaffer
Common Market *v* Clause 4

TUC Impressions/George Doughty & Arthur Sier
West Indian Immigrant Teenagers/Jane King

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

WHITHER LABOUR?

'A repeat of the 1964-70 record, and the position of the present Labour Party as the political force of the British working class will be finished.'

JIM CONWAY, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, in the Union Journal, August, 1972.

September 18, 1972

The important, valuable and positive discussion which has now developed on all sides on the political future of the labour movement will need to take on a larger perspective if it is to be adequate to meet the new problems now arising and the new situation of Britain in a rapidly changing world. There have been six Labour Governments during the past half century: the two minority Governments of MacDonald in 1924 and 1929-31; the two majority Governments of Attlee in 1945-51; and the two majority Governments of Wilson in 1964-70. After the fall of each, in the key years following 1931, 1951 and now after 1970, a highly critical inquest has taken place, with many declarations that the mistakes of the preceding Government which led to its downfall and the return of Toryism to power must never be repeated, and that a decisive new departure breaking new ground in policy must be attempted. It is obvious that a repetition of this familiar gymnastic for a third time can no longer be adequate to come to grips with the real problem. A longer term approach is now essential, not merely to outline a proposed immediate programme for a next Labour Government, but to examine the whole future political perspective of the British working class movement and of the political situation in Britain.

Impetus to Socialism

The world revolutionary upsurge which followed the first victory of the socialist revolution in 1917 swept through all countries. Alongside the profound social and political battles and downfall of old political structures in Europe and in many countries beyond Europe it brought also a transformation of the political situation in Britain. The powerful mass struggles of the British working people,

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which found expression in the soldiers' demobilisation revolts of 1918-19, the mighty strike movement of 1919-20 and the Councils of Action in 1920, was not yet able to overthrow the old social order, since there was not yet political readiness; the most active vanguard of working class fighters tended to conceptions of a syndicalist type looking to the victory of the working class through industrial power; there was not yet among them the revolutionary political understanding which found expression in the teachings of Marx and Lenin, or a revolutionary political party on a mass basis capable of leading the revolt to victory. But the impetus of the first victory of socialism in 1917 and the following upsurge led to the transformation of the Labour Party to adopt a new Constitution in 1918 formally proclaiming the aim of socialism.

Definitions of Socialism

The new Labour Party Constitution of 1918 explicitly defined the aim of socialism in the following terms:

> To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

This was the famous Clause Four against which Gaitskell later delivered his offensive in vain, and which remains on the flagstaff of the Labour Party also today as a formal programmatic aim. For the first two decades after 1918 it was still universally recognised in all official statements that socialism meant, not some airy-fairy spiritual fantasy to cover class realities, but the indispensable economic basis of social *ownership* (not just 'control' or 'management' separated from ownership) of the means of production. Thus Clement Attlee in his book *The Labour Party in Parliament* in 1937 gave the definition:

> All the major industries will be owned and controlled by the community.

Similarly Herbert Morrison in 1934:

> The important essentials of socialism are that all the great industries and the land shall be publicly and collectively owned.

The old standard Labour Party textbook, Fred Henderson's *The Case for Socialism*, originally published in 1911, with a revised edition in 1924, gave the definition:

> That is socialism: community ownership of the land and of the means of producing and distributing wealth.

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Thus in those years before the second world war there was no dispute over this plain meaning of socialism as the proclaimed programmatic aim of the Labour Party since 1918 to establish public ownership of the means of production.

Capitalism in Practice

But this formal proclamation of the aim of socialism, explicitly defined to mean the complete abolition of landlordism and capitalist ownership of industry, and presented as a gospel aim to be preached on Sundays to the faithful, was accompanied in everyday political life by close conformity to the current requirements of capitalism in practice. As the Liberal leader, Asquith, said of the first Labour Government in 1924, when explaining to the National Liberal Federation why he had 'no regrets' over providing the Liberal support to make possible the coming into office of this new phenomenon in the way of governments which had caused initial alarm among the innocent:

> We still sleep more or less comfortably in our beds. Capital steadily pursues its old routine of continuous and on the whole profitable investment.

So long as the first two Labour Governments under MacDonald were minority governments dependent on Liberal support, it was possible for the faithful to console themselves for the failure to carry out the decisive social changes which Labour had at heart by emphasising that Labour was in office, but not in power. It is true that MacDonald loved to insist that Labour was 'in office *and* in power', and showed no sense of pained compulsion in the zest with which he devoted his energies to putting through the American bankers' Dawes Plan during his first administration or Young Plan during his second. But the plea of the minority limitation was still seen as the obstacle to the fulfilment of socialism. The gospel was preached and widely believed in those years that the path to the fulfilment of socialism in Britain was through the election of a Labour majority to parliament.

Dilution of Socialism

In the modern period, during now more than a quarter of a century since the second world war, there have been four absolute Labour majorities returned by the electorate to parliament. But capitalism remains entrenched and dominant in the economy, however much in increasingly close association with the state administrative machine protecting and serving its interests in the so-called 'mixed

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economy'. The official *Labour's Programme for Britain* in 1972 delivers the melancholy verdict after four Labour absolute parliamentary majorities: 'Crucial levers of financial and economic power are still in irresponsible private hands.' Under these circumstances the old simple gospel of a future public ownership of the means of production to be achieved when Labour had a parliamentary majority could no longer be maintained. On the basis of the actual practice there could be only two alternatives in relation to the inheritance of the proclaimed aim of socialism. Either to do as the German Social Democratic Party has done, expunge the term socialism from the programme, and recognise the real programme as the organising of capitalism. This was the plain recognition of facts by the Secretary of the Labour Party, Morgan Phillips, in 1948, when he declared:

> Even when our programme has been completed, by far the greatest part of our industry will still be privately owned and run on private enterprise lines. (Morgan Phillips, address to a public meeting in connection with the Labour Women's Conference at Weston-super-Mare, *Manchester Guardian*, September 30, 1948).

Similarly George Brown said of his National Plan in 1965:

> Most manufacturing industry and commercial enterprise will continue to be largely governed by the market economy. (*The National Plan*, 1965, page 2).

Divorcing Socialism from Class Struggle

The other alternative was to retain the term socialism, robbed of its old plain economic meaning of public ownership of the means of production, and present it instead as a kind of abstract spiritual shibboleth concealing class realities. Thus the characteristic new definition offered by Herbert Morrison in 1950:

> Socialism means the assertion of social responsibility for matters which are properly of social concern. (Herbert Morrison, speech at Perth, June 8, 1950).

Similarly the new *Labour's Programme for Britain* in 1972 explicitly separates the conception of socialism from class or commercial considerations:

> We put the principles of democracy and socialism above considerations of class and market economics.

By the time this stage of spiritual classlessness is reached it is evident that there is need of a considerable new impetus to bring back recognition of the realities of class society.

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Blows of Class Reality

Every time that measures of progressive social reform have been carried through, painfully building up brick by brick the structure of the welfare state, the laws of capitalist society have reasserted themselves, and anguished cries of disillusionment have followed from the ardent architects of reform that the contrasts of wealth and poverty continue unchanged, or even in the declarations of some that the poor have grown poorer. In 1913 Philip Snowden wrote in his pamphlet *The Game of Party Politics*:

> The Liberal legislation of the last seven years has been good as a palliative. but it has never got near the root causes of social inequalities. Wealth is more unequally distributed than it was before Old Age Pensions were given, before the Workmen's Compensation Act was established, before the Trade Boards Act and Minimum Wage for Miners became law. If these things had not been done, the wage-earners would have been the poorer by the benefit they derive from these measures (whatever it may be), but the point is this, that with this palliative legislation the wage-earning class are relatively poorer today in proportion to the total wealth of the nation than they were seven years ago.

In 1931 Ramsay MacDonald expressed his bafflement before the insoluble problem of capitalist crisis in his speech at the Independence Day dinner of the American Society at the Savoy Hotel:

> Here we are today, surrounded by the most mysterious problem of why nations who wish to produce cannot produce; why great masses of people who want to consume cannot find the opportunity of consuming; why these strange things happen which seem contrary to the most elementary assumptions of common sense. Those of us who have been facing these problems have always bowed down our heads in front of them, confessing to being baffled by them.

But in his peroration he found new hope in the 'wise and courageous' leadership of President Hoover, who was to preside in the following year over the most extreme phase of the American economic crisis of 1932.

'We Did Not Know'

Herbert Morrison boasted in 1946 of the 'overall planning organisation' which they were 'rapidly building up', in contrast to the Labour Government of 1929-31, which failed ('floundered from mistake to mistake' in the summary verdict of G. D. H. Cole in his *History of the Labour Party from 1914*) because of the lack of such planning organisation:

> When we went into the economic and financial smash of 1931 we did not know we were going there. We ought to have known what was ahead, but we

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did not, because there was no proper machinery of state to tell us, and when we got there we did not know fully what to do about it. . . .

The real problem of statesmanship in the field of industry and economics is to see the trouble coming and to prevent ourselves getting into the smash. (Herbert Morrison, speech at the Bournemouth Labour Party Conference, June 1946).

With the aid of his 'overall planning organisation' he was able to offer his prediction for 1947:

1947 will be the year in which we are beginning to draw the dividends from our efforts during 1946. We can reasonably look forward to a rather higher level of imports.

The year 1947 saw the record peacetime deficit on the balance of payments, the Cripps emergency programme for austerity and the restriction of imports.

Rhetoric versus Class Reality

In September 1964 Harold Wilson at the head of his newly-formed Labour Government painted a glowing picture of the glorious prospect now opening out for Britain:

A Britain of unsurpassed strength and virility . . . leadership . . . aggressiveness and cutting edge . . . toughening of our fibres . . . new frontiers . . . industrial advance . . . a time for action, for decision and exciting change . . . a time for greatness of mind and heart . . . a sense of purpose in our national life. (Harold Wilson, speech to the Blackpool TUC, September 7, 1964).

In retrospect he described the record of his Government of 1964-70 in more sombre terms:

This book is the record of a Government all but a year of whose life was dominated by an inherited balance of payments problem which was nearing a crisis at the moment we took office. . . . The harsh measures we had to take, and from which we did not shrink, bit deep. (Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-70: A Personal Record*, 1971).

The grim experience of the crippling conditions of the balance of payments pressures resulting from the cold war policies, and the repeated squeezing of home requirements to build up anew the record total of overseas capital investment alongside deficits, all bore harshly on the consumption standards of the people, and frustrated the high hopes of far-reaching social advance which Labour voters had entertained on ending 13 years of Tory rule with a narrow Labour majority in 1964, and extending it to a massive Labour majority in 1966.

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Problem of Labour Disillusion

The result of this record has been the wide disillusionment of many Labour supporters, which made it possible for Toryism to return to power in 1970. This disillusionment already found poignant expression in the suicide of Vicky in 1966. Recognised on all sides for his gifts as one of the most brilliant and humane of cartoonists of the period, Vicky, who had done as much as anyone by his merciless cartoons of Tory leaders to help the Labour Party into office in 1964, wrote in a letter to K. S. Karol just before his death (quoted by the recipient in *Le Nouvelle Observateur*):

> What is happening is terrible. I was right and you were wrong. This Government is worse than the Conservative Government, more hypocritical and more difficult to fight.

The election of 1970 revealed the Labour poll to have fallen to the lowest proportion of the electorate since the war (43.0 per cent, as against 48.8 in 1951, 44.1 in 1964, and 47.9 in 1966). Ian Mikardo has related his experience of the disillusionment of many Labour voters in the election of 1970:

> When going round knocking on doors before the general election he had been heartbroken by the number of former Labour voters who had said: 'I'm not going to vote at all this time, can't see any difference between the parties.' They had now learned the hard way. (Ian Mikardo, Chairman of the Labour Party, Fraternal Delegate's address to the Labour Women's Conference, March 27, 1971).

The whips and scorpions of the present Tory assault on working people are the price exacted for the previous policies of the official Labour leadership to deny the class struggle and play into the hands of capitalism. And it is in this context that such significance attaches to the proceedings of this year's TUC as affording an expression of the powerful, active and fighting forces of the working class.

TUC Class Politics

This year's Trades Union Congress has received an unparalleled barrage of denunciation and hostile reporting from the mass media controlled by the big monopolists. Such a ferocious angry reception by the enemy is a favourable sign from the point of view of the working class. In contrast to the mixed situation in the political movement, especially in parliamentary circles, the proceedings of the TUC were close to class realities. The issues of the keenly contested debates were all issues of class battles and class strategy. This does not mean that the outcome was always positive. There was no lack of

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problems and differences. The left suffered defeats as well as winning victories. But the problems were problems of a movement at an unparalleled high level of development and strength (the slight decline in the total membership of just below ten millions reflected the effects of technological changes and redundancies) having to tackle grave and menacing new challenges from reaction in power. The extreme right was repudiated with the suspension of the thirty-two unions which had failed to carry out Congress policy of de-registering or refusing to register under the Industrial Relations Act. There was an overwhelming unity in opposition to the Act, for refusal to register under it, and to demand its withdrawal. But the dominant leadership of the General Council was able to defeat the left-wing demand, backed by 3½ million votes, for a complete boycott of the machinery of the Act, and for solidarity action for financial aid and, if necessary, industrial action to defend unions under attack by the Act. The policy of the General Council on the Act was endorsed by 7,226,000 to 1,923,000.

Left Gains

At the same time the left won some significant victories, with the carrying against the General Council of the resolution for unqualified opposition to the Common Market (as against the present official Labour policy of 'renegotiation' implying initial acceptance of membership); the adoption of the decision to prepare a constitution for an annual Youth TUC; and some shifts in the composition of the General Council. Progressive international resolutions were unanimously carried, for a European Security Conference, for the recognition of the German Democratic Republic, and on Rhodesia for the principle of no independence before majority rule. A significant sign to the Labour Party was the adoption by an overwhelming majority of a decision to end the ban on the election of Communist Party members to participate in the annual Trades Councils Conference. On all these issues the TUC took in general a more advanced political position than the Labour Party. This brings to the forefront the problem of carrying forward this advance of working class politics which found expression in the TUC to become effective in the political movement.

Mixed Trends of Labour Policy

The political situation in the Labour Party shows a different picture from that in the trade union movement, as expressed in the TUC, although the trade unions provide very nearly nine-tenths of the total

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membership of the Labour Party (but without the same rights of free choice of delegates as they enjoy in the TUC), the greater portion of the finances, and the key mobilising and campaigning forces in the country. Time was when the major unions under the then dominant leadership were widely regarded as bastions of reaction in Labour politics, against whose impregnable power isolated militant socialists in the constituency parties felt themselves conducting a desperately unequal battle. That picture is now changed. The alliance of powerful progressive forces of trade unionism with the extending range of active left militants in the Labour Party has already won significant achievements in progressive decisions in the Labour Party Conference and in the Labour Party Executive. But in the parliamentary party there is not yet a corresponding level. The powerful ultra-right section, represented by Roy Jenkins and his associates, have shown themselves close enough to Toryism to have saved the Tory Government from defeat several times by their votes or abstention, as in the critical division on the Common Market on October 28, 1971, when the Tory Government only won a majority of 112 thanks to the role of 89 Labour MPs (69 voting on the side of the Tory Government and 20 abstaining), whose votes if cast according to the official Labour policy would have brought a defeat of the Tory Government by a majority of 46 votes. Similar saving of the Tory Government by ultra-right Labour votes took place on subsequent dates, as on April 18 and on June 6 this year.

Official Leadership and the Left

The official leadership, as represented by Harold Wilson, while seeking to maintain unity of conflicting sections, with token concessions to the left, has played into the hands of the ultra-right, as shown by the two-line whip (in place of a mandatory three-line whip) on the Common Market, giving thus the green light for the ultra-right to save the Tory Government by their votes and abstentions. The left in a minority position has conducted invaluable positive activity; but from the nature of the parliamentary situation and their minority position this has been the activity of individuals or groups of individuals, rather than of a political organisation with a consistent common policy. The development of the Tribune Group has been a most important step forward in the endeavour to solve these problems under existing conditions; but this does not of course exclude variations of policy of individuals on particular issues. In some cases the influence of leftist or ultra-left trends can hinder unity of the left. Hence in considering the future of the political labour movement it is

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necessary to take into account the very varied range of groupings and policies at present finding expression within it in order to judge the best path for the next stage of advance of united action of all on the left and all fighters for socialism.

'Labour's Programme for Britain'

The official Labour Party Executive Green Paper under the title *Labour's Programme for Britain*, which was examined by Jim Sillars MP in our last month's issue, was published with a built-in safety device of a preliminary announcement that it is only presented as a 'basis for discussion' not to be amended, endorsed or rejected ('It is not our intention to ask Conference to endorse this programme'). The real programme, it was explained, will be published later. This device ensures freedom to throw in proposals, especially on the social services, likely to appeal to the left, without undertaking any binding obligation to carry them out. Even so the assumptions of the continuing basis of capitalism and capitalist requirements show through in the handling of every thorny issue. Thus the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act is to be followed by the establishment of a Conciliation and Arbitration Service. It might be thought that the break with the compulsory powers of the old Act would mean that the new Arbitration Service would be voluntary. But a proviso is carefully added at the end: 'In most cases arbitration will be by mutual consent, although provision will also be made for arbitration at the request of one party.' Similarly the aim of a voluntary incomes policy is announced. But at the end of the section the proviso is added: 'The extent of government intervention will have to depend on how successful voluntary efforts are.' The favourite device is to announce a 'study group' for the most dangerous issues. A 'study group' will consider what to do about land ownership. Another will consider the problems of nationalisation in relation to the banks and financial institutions. There has been established also a European Security Study Group, a Defence Spending Study Group, an Overseas Development Study Group, and so on. It may be confidently expected that the Conference delegates, to judge from the character of the 455 resolutions which their organisations have submitted in the preliminary agenda, will insist on very much more definite decisions in a progressive direction than the indications of this evasive and unsatisfactory document.

Fabianism Woos the Left

After the collapse of the second Labour Government in 1931 by the

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betrayal of its leaders, MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas, to join up with the Tories in a 'National Government', the old leaders and founders of Fabianism, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, had the strength and insight to recognise that this was no question of a mere personal desertion, but a bankruptcy of Labour reformism; and they had the courage to state publicly that their error had been to fail to recognise the validity of the Marxist theory of capitalism:

> Where we went hopelessly wrong was in ignoring Karl Marx's forecast of the eventual breakdown of the capitalist system. . . .
>
> In case I should not live to finish this Autobiography, here is a short indication of the successive stages of our conversion to the Marxist theory of the historical development of profit-making capitalism. (Beatrice Webb: *Our Partnership*, Postscript 1948).

They went on to study the successful construction of socialism in the Soviet Union and recorded their findings in their monumental work *Soviet Communism: a New Civilisation?*. In a further edition they removed the question mark. The modern Fabians today, after the fall of the Sixth Labour Government in 1970 have not attempted the same basic approach as the founders; but in their *Labour and Inequality** sixteen Fabian essayists have made a serious review, backed by detailed statistical evidence, of the failure of the Wilson Labour Government of 1964-70 to achieve any significant change in the distribution of wealth and poverty and the inequality of class society. The conclusion is reached (page 298) that the Wilson Labour Government

> withdrew from the obstinate pursuit of socialist objectives. Its social achievements were much smaller than claimed or believed at the time by Labour ministers. Major onslaughts on inequality and poverty were required but not mounted.

The detailed study in a wide range of domestic, social and economic fields provides valuable information to indicate what the Introduction presents as 'the need for radical policy'. It is a significant expression of current political trends that the Fabians today should be endeavouring, 'over the corpse of the dead Government' in the words of the Introduction, to analyse what they describe as the 'gloomy picture' of the failure of the latest Labour Government to accomplish any significant social change, and should be providing ammunition for the left to work for more radical policies. But it is an expression of the blinkered blindness of the Fabian approach that this most detailed review of policy in every domestic, economic and

* *Labour and Inequality*, edited by Peter Townsend, Fabian Society, 304 pp., £3.80.

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social field should be conducted in a sealed compartment of isolation, without any consideration of the main decisive issues which in fact dominated the Labour Government's policies and limited its possibilities at home, the issues which found expression in the crippling burdens of the balance of payments problems consequent on the policies of the cold war, rearmament, Nato, overseas military expenditure and capital exports. This is indeed Hamlet without the prince.

Leftist Trends

In passionate revolt against the dominance of the old right-wing policies some sections on the left, especially among some of the young people seriously seeking to find their way forward in the modern political jungle, become victims of revolutionary impatience, to attempt to substitute their subjective desires for immediate revolution to be carried out by a heroic vanguard, in place of the grinding tasks of building up social and political organisation, and carrying forward the daily struggle for limited objectives at first, in order to prepare the indispensable development of the working class and mass movement, alongside political preparedness, which can alone make possible the final fulfilment of the aim of socialism. Fashions in the cult of various spokesmen of these leftist trends have gone through many quick successive changes. The most helpful guide to the study of these leftist trends will be found in the book *New Theories of Revolution* by Jack Woddis*, published this year, which bases its survey on three principal spokesmen of these trends, Fanon in relation to Africa, Debray in relation to Latin America, and Marcuse in relation to the Western imperialist developed countries. It is true that this survey is conducted from a Marxist standpoint, but the special value of the method of this study is that it does not approach the issue as a polemic of one theory against another, but instead begins from a most sympathetic understanding of the revolutionary devotion and courageous record of such figures as Fanon and Debray (the question of Marcuse is a different one) however much the outcome may have disappointed their intentions. From this approach of sympathetic understanding of sincere left aspirations, the author proceeds, not to conduct an abstract battle of rival theories, but to examine with a wealth of detail the concrete realities of the highly varied specific social, economic and political problems and forms of development of the popular movement of different countries of Africa, Latin America or the Western imperialist world. Such a survey makes clear

* *New Theories of Revolution*, Jack Woddis, Lawrence & Wishart, 416 pp., £4.50.

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that the problems of the advance of the popular struggle in the extremely varied concrete conditions of these countries cannot be solved by any schematic application of some abstract simplified formula of instant revolution by an isolated vanguard.

Weapon of Marxism

Lenin loved to quote Plekhanov's statement: 'There is no abstract truth; truth is always concrete.' Marx once said: 'We must take things as they are, that is, uphold the revolutionary cause in a form that corresponds to changed circumstances' (letter to Kugelmann, August 23, 1866). The special value of the survey *New Theories of Revolution* is that the author is able to use his detailed knowledge, already demonstrated in his previous series of books published on African development and problems, to show the highly varied specific character of the conditions and stage of development of the movement in the different countries of Africa, and similarly in the different countries of Latin America. The case of Marcuse is a different one; for the only consistent principle of this chameleon exponent of a thousand contradictory theories, which delight the publicists of Western imperialism to discuss, is his denial of the role of the working class in the Western advanced countries as having become a joint sharer in exploitation and incapable of militant struggle—a view which recent events have rendered dramatically out of date. Here the final section of this survey presents effectively the key role of the working class at the head of the struggle of all sections of the people. The only criticism that might be offered of the merits of this valuable survey is that the wealth of detailed study and erudition can lead to the wood being lost for the trees. Thus in Africa the detailed study of the internal situation in each country omits the wider international context of the role of imperialism and neo-colonialism in its strategy to counter or disorganise the liberation movement. Lumumba receives only an incidental reference; the whole confrontation of Hammerskjöld and Lumumba, so revealing in its lessons for the African struggle, is missing. But this one point of criticism should not diminish the recognition of the high value of this survey which provides indispensable guidance for all students of modern problems.

What is the Next Stage of Advance?

Does this critical survey of representative expressions of programmes at present offered for future policy, by the Labour Party

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Executive, by present-day Fabians, or by leftist trends, mean that only the absolute goal of instant and complete socialism could be accepted as the next step for the present stage of the labour movement? Such a dogmatic approach would be as inappropriate as the other types of programme which have been examined. Certainly the whole economic and social structure of British capitalism, the oldest in the world and now the most advanced in decay, has been ripe and over-ripe for half a century to be superseded by socialism. Delay in carrying through this overdue transition is at the root of the chronic conditions of crisis under which generations have now grown up with such familiarity as to regard it as the normal condition of existence. But the political conditions for this urgent necessary change to the fulfilment of socialism are not yet ready. The experience of every successful socialist revolution has shown that such success has only been won where there is not only an objective revolutionary situation but the subjective factor is also ready, which finds expression on the political field in the role of a political party based on the principles of the class struggle, of scientific socialism, strongly established in the working class and capable of leading the masses of the people in action. In Britain important advances are being achieved towards these conditions, but these advances are still in a preparatory stage. Therefore it is necessary in this situation for fighters of the left to seek to build up unity on the basis of an interim transitional programme, which shall not repeat the discredited record of the old Labour Governments, but shall be capable of uniting the labour movement and the broad masses of the people for new paths of advance.

Towards a United Anti-Monopolist Programme

Powerful forces for change are gathering in the present position in Britain. But the parliamentary representation of the labour movement, despite increasing activity on the left and some concessions to the left, is still in practice dominated by the old reformist conceptions which, if left unchanged, could only lead to a repetition of the old type of Labour Government. This is the problem of the present political situation in Britain. Recent industrial struggles have demonstrated a new unprecedented high level of class solidarity and militancy, with abundant initiatives and activities on the grass-roots level in the factories and workshops, ports and localities, and taking on a character of direct confrontation with the Government and challenging of penal legislation. But all experience has shown that a militant industrial wave can rise and fall without changing society,

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unless it is translated into a conscious political movement with the aim of social change. This is the political task to which the progressive forces of trade unionism are now addressing themselves, to use their power to bring new strength and vitality in the political labour movement. Along this path the combined campaign of all on the left in the trade unions and in the Labour Party, together with the Communist Party as the political party based on the principles of the class struggle and scientific socialism and with close links with all the vanguard fighters of the working class, would be able to revitalise the political labour movement, end barriers of division, and unite such a revitalised political labour movement with the widest sections of the people seeking change in a mighty mass movement capable of challenging and defeating the present domination of Toryism and the big monopolies. The strength and success of such a united mass movement could not be achieved for the objective of repeating the old type of Labour Government on which there is such wide disillusion, but only on the basis of a united alternative programme corresponding to the urgent issues and needs of the present situation in Britain. Such a united alternative programme would make a real break into the key strongholds of the big monopolies; replace the cold war by a consistent policy for peace, slashing the arms programme and ending the surrender of Britain to be a nuclear base; and by the decisive changes in economic, social and foreign policy make possible a constructive expansion of production and rising social standards. All this will meet with strong opposition from the representatives of the old order; but the united struggle of the mass of the people for their aims will help to prepare the conditions for the next stage of advance.

Unity of All Fighters for Socialism

Within such a broad anti-monopolist mass movement, drawing in all sections of the political labour movement, and the widest sections of the people prepared to support such a common programme, the political role of the fighters for socialism is essential in the interests of the advance of the whole movement to maintain unity of purpose and to be alert to respond to new factors in the political situation. For the fulfilment of this role it is essential that the co-operation of all fighters for the aims of socialism should not be hindered by artificial barriers. In giving fraternal greetings of the Labour Party to the TUC, Tony Benn, as Chairman of the Labour Party said:

> The trade union movement must seek its political objectives as an integral

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part of an organised, democratic, Labour Party in parliament, with a socialist programme.

This conception could be regarded as the expression of a future ideal provided it is recognised that it is the formulation of an ideal to be fulfilled rather than a description of the existing situation. For in the actual situation at present the trade unions are prevented from fulfilling their 'political objectives' as 'an integral part' of the Labour Party, because they are not allowed the same freedom of choice of their delegates to the Labour Party Conference as they enjoy to the TUC. The system of bans and proscriptions which denies trade unions the right of sending elected delegates of their choice in whom they have confidence to the Labour Party Conference if these are members of the Communist Party has kept out some of the finest fighters of the labour movement, so that honoured general secretaries of major unions have had to advise their delegations from behind the scenes. This system is a relic of the Morrison-Bevin era. In the present period the rigidity of the old barriers to co-operation have been much relaxed, and there has been increasingly wide co-operation of all on the left, communist and non-communist, for common aims. The decision of the TUC to end the ban on the election of members of the Communist Party to the annual Trades Council Conference is a sign of the times and a helpful indication to the Labour Party Conference. The removal of these bans and proscriptions would promote co-operation among all active fighters for socialism and would help to strengthen the activity of the whole labour movement for the great tasks and issues in front.

An Organ of Left Unity

Our journal carries on its cover the banner headline 'A Magazine of Left Unity'. Ever since its foundation over half a century ago to the present day our journal has defined its role and sought to make its contribution as an organ of left unity and international co-operation. Through all these years our contributors have represented a very wide range of fighters on the left and for popular advance, trade unionists, socialists, communists and anti-imperialist liberation fighters. Today we are happy to recognise the extending strength, activity and unity of all friends on the left, and look with confidence for the strengthening of still broader united co-operation for the aims of peace and socialism.

R.P.D.

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COMMON MARKET— CONFERENCE CHOICE

(1) Challenge to Labour

Alex Eadie MP*

ONE reason why the Common Market could dominate the 1972 Labour Party Conference at Blackpool is that it was the one issue that could have defeated the Tory Government in the past parliamentary session. When resolutions are debated on the Housing Act, Industrial Relations Act, unemployment, Value Added Tax, etc., niggling in the mind is the question: Would all this have been necessary? Pro-marketeers in parliament dismiss this as wishful thinking, although it was more than hinted by some that a Tory Government must be preserved until Market entry was completed.

In the argument about whether Heath's Government would have fallen, it is difficult to grasp any reasoning that will not concede that defeat then would, at least, have bled a Tory Government to death. Heath himself told parliament, in a speech closing one of the many debates, that unless his Government got a majority the life of this parliament must come to an end. A prime minister cannot be more desperate or threatening than that! On that occasion the result was a wafer-thin majority, even with the Liberals' support. A united Labour vote would have meant defeat.

Many more experienced parliamentarians saw this as a battle by Heath for his own personal political survival. He was telling Tory Members of Parliament, particularly anti-Market ones, in essence—Defeat me and you will have no Tory Government. It is doubtful if the Tory establishment would have tolerated such a threat if Heath had failed to get a parliamentary majority. Ted Heath's political throat would have been ruthlessly cut and a new leader sought.

There was an opinion that a general election might not have been held after Heath's political demise. With the Tories having a commanding majority in parliament they would send their new nominee to the Queen to form a government, and he would get it. But how

* Alex Eadie is Member of Parliament for Midlothian. He worked for more than twenty-five years in the pits before entering parliament (most of the time at the coal face). He was sacked by Harold Wilson in 1967 from his post as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the then Minister of Social Security, the Rt Hon Peggy Herbison MP, for refusing to support entry to the Common Market. At present he is Chairman of the Power and Steel Group in the Commons as well as being Vice-Chairman of the Trade Union Group. This year he has been Chairman of the Miners' Parliamentary Group and as a consequence is *ex officio* on the National Executive of the National Union of Mineworkers.

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long would any such government have survived in the political climate of the worst period for industrial strife since 1926, unemployment on a scale that competes with the scandalous pre-war era and price increases that harass housewives in their weekly shopping? Couple all this with the political bungling and ineptitude that has characterised the Government of this country since June 1970 and the weight of argument will be with the delegates who believe that this majority Tory parliament could have been ended.

It will come as no surprise to the Conference if delegates to the rostrum hammer out the remarkable change that has blossomed forth in the Market controversy. Many of the pro-Marketeers' arguments have been drenched, not only by the difficulties the Common Market is confronted with today, but by the reality of our entry. All the high-sounding rhetoric melted this year. France, the leading member of the Market countries, unilaterally goes ahead and explodes its own nuclear bomb. The pressure of protests at this act from member countries was pathetic, and hardly a whimper of concern came from Heath's Government. So much for preserving peace if six countries become ten.

Optimism about the future of British industry when we get in had been a keynote: some would do well, and balance any section not so fortunate. Where was steel in the permutation? An industrial nation like Britain must depend on steel to produce the goods. We must sell abroad for economic survival. Before we are in the Market, plans for contracting this industry have already been debated in parliament. The target figure has been amended to production of between 28 and 36 million tons when previously targets of over 40 million tons were reckoned necessary. The falling off in world demand for steel was a weak excuse for this industrial vandalism. Demand for steel notoriously fluctuates, and already it is picking up. The Government is planning under-capacity in a traditional industry. It is no secret in Whitehall that imports from the Market countries of steel will be on the cards. In any case we will have sacrificed major control over the industry once we are in the Market. Demand and capacity will be decided by the EEC agencies. Heath has made it easy for them before we go in, and the sacrifice will be of steelmen's jobs.

With the inability of successive governments to solve Britain's regional problems, areas like Scotland, Wales and the north-east have been saddled with chronic unemployment. Pro-Marketeers showed no shyness in dangling the prospect of improved regional policies when we entered the EEC. Aided and abetted by an almost unanimous pro-Market press, it was with great difficulty that the

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real situation was smoked out into the open. There existed no regional policies of the Market worth discussion: each member country had its own regional policy but they were subject to regulation and scrutiny, 'unfair competition' to other member countries being the test of suitability or otherwise of policies for their regions.

Not to be outdone by earlier exposure, Ted Heath's summit meeting with Pompidou of France was hailed by the Marketeers as the signpost to a Common Market regional policy, and all doubts were to be dispelled even about Britain's existing policies. But the weeds have started sprouting on these hopes. The summit is delayed and the eventual date is anybody's guess. In true General de Gaulle fashion the French are laying down conditions. They want the Foreign Office Secretariat located in Paris, although logic should have it based in Brussels, and they are known to be opposed to Community funds being used for regional help, as it can only be at the expense of the benefits she gets from the Common Market agricultural policy which makes no sense in British eyes. Interesting here was that in parliament many pro-Marketeers were giving support with what they described as a caveat of opposition to the Common Agricultural Policy. Realisation must begin to dawn that the Market will be no garden for the regions.

The background of the Market has obviously sparked off the argument about the relationship between the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Annual Conference of the Labour Party. The dictum of Edmund Burke in relation to the independence of MPs will be hard to use as a shield in defence of MPs in the Parliamentary Labour Party who ignore Conference decisions. In any case, in Burke's day there was no mass trade union movement and no Labour Party. A *Tribune* pamphlet on this issue will provide a discussion basis for the members of the Party who want to see changes in the relationship, and who will fight to see Party Conference decisions supported and implemented by its parliamentarians.

It is the view of many MPs that a strong *rapport* will soon be established with Conference when some Labour MPs learn that they are not doing the Labour Party a favour by being a member. A privilege has been afforded to them, and they should realise this.

My hope for this Conference will be that the excitement shown by mainly anti-Labour commentators will not detract from the necessity for delegates to resolve that the return of a Labour Government has its priority, with policies to match. Time is the very essence. For Labour to be impaled on the hook of opposition for years only dims the prospect of being able to renegotiate or stay out.

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LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

Long ago the question of the nature of the change desired was thrashed out by clear thinkers, and as the years have rolled on the genuine students of sociology, viewing life from the working class standpoint, have known and declared ten thousand times that nothing short of a revolution can correct the evils we deplore under the existing system. That is, nothing less than the overthrow of the capitalist system based on production for profit, and the bringing in of a system of real socialism, or production for use, can cure the evils that afflict the working class, and this means, in plain and clear language, the social revolution....

The Syndicalist aimed at depriving the state of its power to tyrannise, and for the workers to secure their own freedom, by such industrial organisation as would enable the workers to refuse to produce, and therefore to refuse to carry on industry under capitalist domination, by themselves undertaking entire responsibility for managing industry....

The Syndicalists, in their constant endeavour to organise and control industry, believing that parliamentary action was of no avail unless it was preceded by effective industrial organisation, gave very little attention to parliamentary methods, and were frequently termed the 'anti-politicals' or 'industrialists'. This was right so far as it meant opposition to relying upon parliamentary institutions; but when it was taken to mean that the struggle was simply an industrial struggle to be waged on the industrial field, and that the state would be ignored, this was a misunderstanding of the real Syndicalist view, and this misunderstanding has led to harmful results in this country.

Now, however, the experience of the war and after the war has shown conclusively that we can no longer think simply of an industrial struggle, and industrial organisation alone is not enough. Whatever is done by industrial organisation, the organised state machine will continue to function, and will beyond question be used by the plutocracy in any and every available form against the workers. The dominant ruling capitalist class, the plutocracy, have complete control of that highly efficient machine for class purposes; the interests of the community are ever secondary to the maintenance of power by the master class, and that machine will continue to be theirs until it is wrested from them by the workers....

We must be able to function as a class and not merely as sections; we must be directly related to each other district by district and in every occupation. We require therefore a suitable agency through which we can function, by means of which we can take concerted action; we must turn the industrial struggle into a political struggle and our outlook must be not national only but genuinely international also.

(From 'From Syndicalism to Communism', by Tom Mann,

Labour Monthly, October, 1921)

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(2) Common Market *v* Clause 4

Gordon Schaffer

THE only question concerning the Common Market which delegates to the Labour Conference will have to decide is whether to endorse the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Constructional Section) resolution calling on a future Labour government to withdraw, or alternatively to accept the proposal of the Boilermakers to attempt to renegotiate terms and to withdraw if this proves impossible. Two resolutions from pro-market constituency parties, which evade the issue, by talking of British membership creating a 'socialist Europe', have no chance of acceptance.

This means that after the Conference, the Labour Party will be committed to withdrawal, because everybody knows and every delegate who goes to the rostrum at the conference knows, that there is no chance whatever of the EEC Commission agreeing to reopen negotiations, much less consenting to modify the basic principles of the Rome Treaty and the hundreds of regulations issued since.

What then is the purpose of this manoeuvre to avoid a clear-cut rejection in favour of a course of action which must prove futile? If it is designed as a face-saver for the pro-marketeers, it is singularly inept, for they know it cannot succeed. Or do they hope that, despite the decision of Conference, a future Labour government will be compelled to tell the country that it cannot withdraw?

Michael Stewart, Foreign Secretary in the Labour Government, wrote in *Le Figaro* (Paris) on March 3, 1971, in answer to a correspondent who had suggested a future British government 'might try to put the Community system into question': 'Your fears of seeing a future Labour government default on the conditions negotiated by its predecessor are completely without foundation.'

The declaration on renegotiation was made by Harold Wilson in the House of Commons on October 28, 1971. He said the terms accepted by the Conservative government, arising out of the burdens imposed by the Common Agricultural Policy, the ban on Commonwealth preference and the refusal to allow tax and other concessions to areas of high employment were unacceptable. Then he added: 'They [the EEC] might accept this or they might decide we should agree to part. That would depend on them. That is our position.'

This was clear enough, but then he said: 'It is well known, one parliament cannot bind its successor. Now this may be formally inconsistent with the Rome Treaty. Whether it is, or is not, is something on which constitutional laws are not clear. On the other

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hand, we recognise what is involved in a treaty signature.' And that is not clear at all.

During the long debates on the legislation for entry to EEC, there were declarations by ministers that national sovereignty was not infringed, but when it came down to detail, there were frank admissions that Community laws overrode our own laws. That was why the original intention to bring in legislation amending various acts in conflict with EEC laws was abandoned in favour of a blanket acceptance of the Treaty of Rome and all subsequent regulations.

To give the EEC Commission its due, they made clear to the Labour government before negotiations began, that none of the basic principles of the Treaty of Rome could be modified and that all subsequent decisions, including the points mentioned by Mr Wilson as a basis for renegotiation, must be accepted.

Under Community law, 'member states, the EEC Commission and individuals may appeal to the EEC Court of Justice,' whenever they think the 'Community treaties have been violated' (*European Community*, April 1971). What happens if another EEC member or a pro-marketeer, individually, goes to the Court to ask for a ruling that a British withdrawal is illegal?

But for the Labour Party delegates, there is a more immediate issue. The agenda has a series of resolutions calling for a programme, based on Clause 4 of the Labour Party constitution, demanding nationalisation of the land and of industries comprising the 'commanding heights of the economy'. There is a demand from the electrical workers for nationalisation, without compensation, of sectors hived off to private industry, and other resolutions call for control of multi-national companies 'in the interests of the British people', and for repeal of Value Added Tax (VAT).

All these are incompatible with Britain's obligations as a member of EEC. It is true there are nationalised industries in the present member countries, but the Treaty of Rome lays down, as a first principle, that there must be no 'distortion of competition' (Article 3 (f)); and article 37, stipulating the rules for any state monopolies, makes it quite clear that no control of the commanding heights of the economy would be allowed. Before negotiations started, the Commission said that 'state monopolies of a commercial nature will have to be adjusted as provided for in the Treaty of Rome.' Another condition was that Britain would have to modify its legislation to provide for creation of European companies, as provided for in article 220 of the Rome Treaty.

To meet these demands the Tory government is selling the Carlisle

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pubs, the railway hotels and Cooks (all nationally owned) to private enterprise.

The West European Common Market was created as an enclave of international capitalism, and its philosophy was enshrined in the Treaty of Rome. That is the simple fact. The Labour pro-marketeers, who saved the Tory government by their votes, in the main, accept the same viewpoint as the people who, in the Gaitskell period, wanted to eliminate Clause 4 from the Labour Party constitution. The German Social Democratic Party have eliminated all socialist content from their programme.

If the starry-eyed marketeers, who talk of 'European socialism' want to test these realities, I suggest they ask the EEC Court of Justice whether Clause 4 and the sweeping calls for common ownership and planning of the economy which will be accepted at Blackpool are compatible with the Treaty of Rome.

There can be no doubt of the answer. What is important is that the labour movement should made a clear stand now, and not, once more, confuse the issue. If the Labour Party had opposed the Common Market at the last election, it would have won. Before the next election, the effects of food taxes, VAT and the other Common Market measures will be felt by all our people. The Labour Party has a duty to declare, before the Treaty is ratified, that it will not be bound by its terms, and that the will of the British people, democratically expressed, can change laws made in Brussels or Westminster.

LABOUR RESEARCH

Roger Simon
Secretary
Labour Research Department

THE LRD came into existence 60 years ago during a period of great social unrest, massive strikes, and rapid spread of trade unionism. Amidst a ferment of discussion between Fabians, Guild Socialists, Syndicalists and others, Beatrice Webb conceived the idea of a new sort of social research to work out the way in which industry should be run in a socialist state. So a Committee of Inquiry into the Control of Industry was set up as on offshoot of the Fabian Society in 1912. Many enthusiastic young researchers came together with established radical figures in this project, and within a year they were calling themselves the Fabian Research Department.

The 1914-18 war changed the direction of their work. The trade

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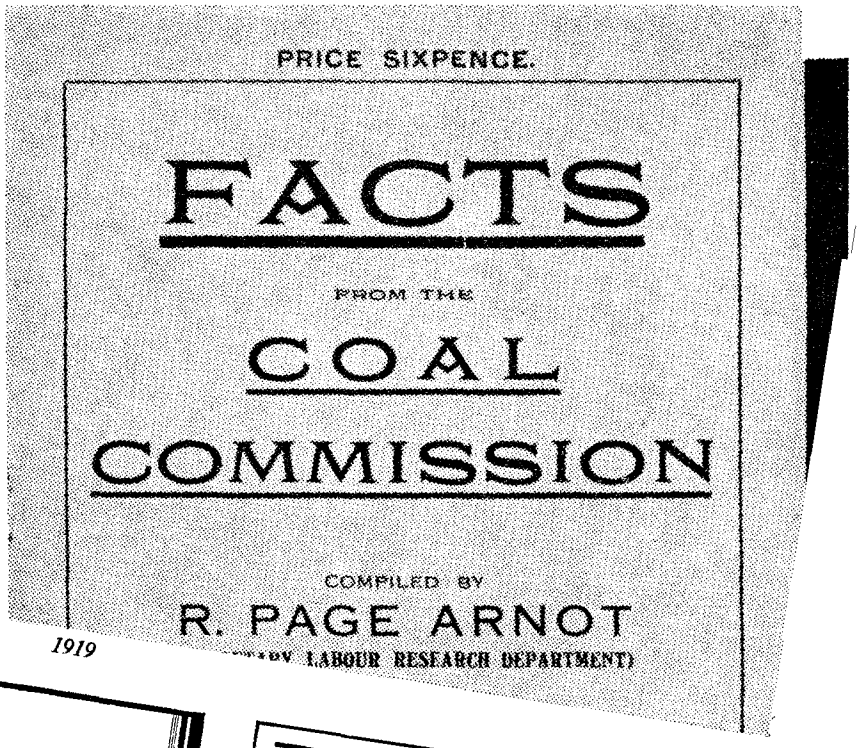

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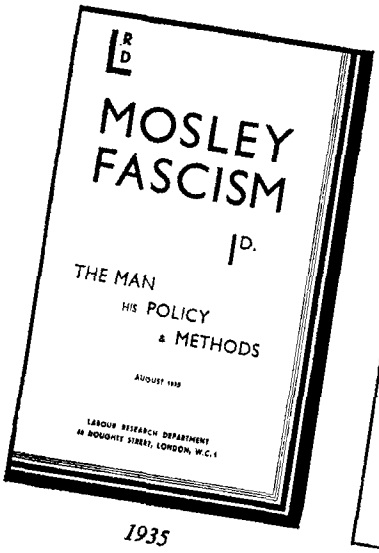

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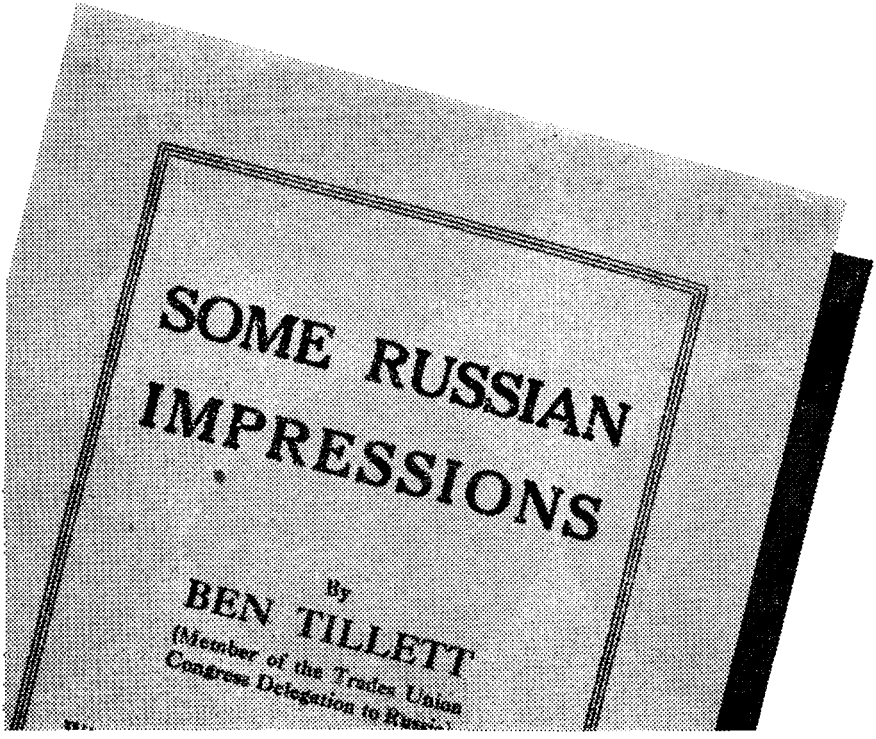

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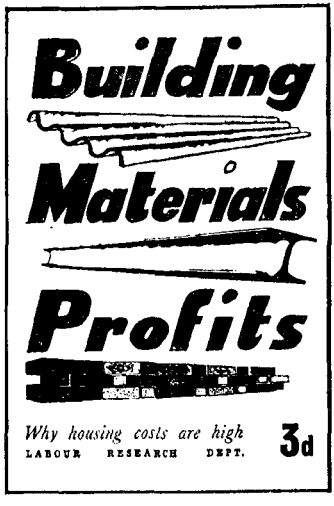

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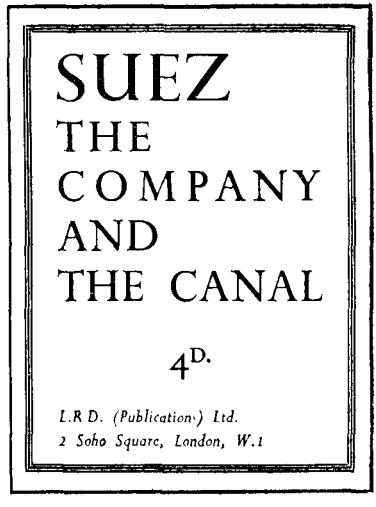

1956

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(continued from page 459)

unions needed facts to help them in all kinds of immediate struggles, and they turned increasingly to the Department. Its work was transformed into research to meet these needs. New rules were adopted in 1917 providing for the affiliation of trade unions and labour bodies, and the name was changed to the Labour Research Department. In the 1919 annual report Bernard Shaw, who was chairman of the Department from 1914-19, was able to write that 'the Labour Research Department after seven years' growth has now taken shape as a vital organ of the labour movement generally.'

Ever since, the LRD has been examining, analysing and making known to the labour movement the facts and figures it needs—by means of the publication of pamphlets, the monthly *Labour Research*, and the weekly *Fact Service*, and by answering enquiries which are now running at over 2,000 a year. Since its foundation, the LRD has been closely associated with the struggles of the miners, the railwaymen, the engineers, the building workers, the dockers, the print and paper workers and many other sections of the movement.

Among those who made major contributions in the pioneering days, apart from Beatrice and Sidney Webb, were Robin Page Arnot (Secretary 1914-26) and Eva Reckitt, who are both still on our Executive Committee; William Mellor, G. D. H. Cole and Margaret Cole, Emile Burns and Elinor Burns, and others too numerous to mention. But mention must be made of R. Palme Dutt, who was secretary of the International Section of the LRD from 1919-21, editor of the *Labour International Handbook* published in 1921, and a member of the Executive Committee from 1921-25.

Of course there have been tremendous changes since those days, but the solid foundations laid by the pioneers have enabled the LRD to adapt itself to the changing needs of the movement, as is shown by the continually expanding demand for its services. In 1918 there were 246 bodies affiliated to the LRD. In the mid-1950s there were about 600. Now there are over 1,300 including about 40 national unions, 700 trade union branches and districts, 300 shop stewards' committees and over 100 trades councils; and the number continues to grow.

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TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

A Concluding Review of the Series

Richard Briginshaw*
General Secretary
National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel

(*This series of discussion contributions on 'Trade Unions and the Labour Party' was opened by Dick Seabrook, President of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, in the Febraury issue of* Labour Monthly. *Other contributors included Alan Fisher, General Secretary of the National Union of Public Employees and a member of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress; Alex McFadden, Executive Committee member of the National Union of Railwaymen and Secretary of the NUR's Negotiating Committee; Joan Maynard, a leading member of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers; Christopher Norwood, a Divisional Councillor of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers; Ernie Roberts, Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers —Engineering Section; and John Wood, the retired General Secretary of the Scottish Area of the National Union of Mineworkers.*—Ed. *LM*)

THE series, 'Trade Unions and the Labour Party', published in *Labour Monthly* over the past period, has produced some serious thinking by the contributors. Alex McFadden in April particularised the resolution of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (NUR's forerunner) which was carried in the TUC in 1899. Most contributors have referred to this beginning of association of the TUC and Labour Party. The first objective was extremely limited, inviting a broad front of working class organisations to unite in securing an increased number of Labour members in parliament. The fact that there was a considerable minority vote at the 1899 TUC against this proposition indicates the stage of development of the working class in Britain at that time. Capitalist exploitation was in full swing at home and abroad, but the very nature of the first modern imperialism was able to produce an aristocracy of labour. It did not mean much—25 shillings for a craftsman against 18 shillings per week for a labourer (for a 50 hour week)—but it was a limiting factor in the class struggle.

* Richard Briginshaw is a member of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

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The new unions had come into being, but much had to be done. The weakness then and the weakness now is an insufficient theoretical understanding of the society we live in, i.e. capitalist. This does not mean a rejection of broad front activity. It does not mean that the trade unionists should fail to see the Labour Party as a mass organisation of the working class in Britain, but that the imperative is now present in Britain to change the Labour Party, lock, stock and barrel. The Labour Party needs the kiss of life from the trade union rank and file. The Labour Party at this moment is too valuable to itself to miss one good trade union worker through outdated proscription procedures. Does not the Labour Party need to be on guard against agents of our capitalist rulers? Yes, it does. Does this not mean that proper regulations are needed? The answer here too is yes. The ultra-left is often on a similar line as the ultra-right. At the top the renewal of liaison between the TUC and the Labour Party is welcome. The TUC has rightly demanded a repeal of the Industrial Relations Act. The Labour Party agrees this shall be done, but the familiar voices from the past reiterate the 'responsibilities' of government. From this, too, the paths of previous failure are only a short step. Two paragraphs from *Labour's Programme for Britain* indicate the long way that has yet to be travelled:

> Policy in the Labour Party is made by the members. The long-term programme of the Party is determined by Annual Conference. Clause 5 of our Constitution then gives the elected National Executive Committee and the elected Parliamentary Committee the right to take initiatives from time to time and, when a general election occurs, the task of selecting those items of policy which should go into our manifesto.
>
> It is the *former* responsibility, not the latter, which the National Executive Committee is exercising in publishing this document. It is not a *manifesto*, though it contains proposals which will go into our manifesto. It makes proposals in some fields which could not be carried through in a single parliament, and sets out objectives some of which would not be attained in five years through lack of resources. It is at the same time a document more ambitious than a manifesto, and yet one in which the NEC is well aware of important gaps.

Herein is the heart of the matter: policy-making and policy control. The Parliamentary Labour Party has too much autonomy. The excuse put forward, that this is needed to meet constitutional requirements in dealing with MPs, is not valid and should be rejected.

Alan Fisher, General Secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, in his contribution in September made the point about the subjective limited beginnings of the political developments

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that the trade unions called for. He makes the valid point as well that the trade unions did become fertile ground for the development of class consciousness by the worker who may well have joined for the most elementary defensive reasons. The extremely limited advances made by the political parties since the second world war, the policies of consensus and me-tooism that have provided this, have contributed to the situation that Alan Fisher also mentions, that together these, with the experiences of two world wars, successive economic crises have led to a more assertive, confident and militant trade unionism. This is true to a limited extent. It *can* lead to a blind alley syndicalism unless the emphasis that the participants in this discussion have made is brought home to the whole of our movement.

Now, more than ever, the Labour Party needs the dynamic that the trade unionists can provide. The trade unions need the vehicle of the political party to achieve the power that needs to be used for positive political, economic and social reasons. The historical tasks of the working class can be expressed and achieved in this way. The need is urgent. The trade unionists *are* raising their sights. *They are still too timid* in their political demands.

The present period in Britain takes us through the immediate demands on wages, hours, working conditions, housing, against pollution of the atmosphere, of bodies and minds—through the higher defensive struggles of which the UCS and work-ins were classic of our time, *to the imperative of the need to challenge* for real political power for the people in Britain. It is only we, the people, who can save Britain from the ruin that capitalism is producing. It is only we who can ensure the future, a new future. We must use the tools to hand.

The trade unionists should make bold demands on the Labour Party because the Labour Party that really seeks to tackle capitalism in Britain will need great co-operation and support from the trade unions. Time is short for the labour movement to repair all relationships. Time is short for the Labour Party. History gives this Party the challenge to overcome Britain's crises. If it is missed this time there can be no future for such a Labour Party. *The trade unions are, and must be, involved in what will be a titanic struggle for Britain's future if the battle with our capitalist rulers is really joined.* The militancy of the working people should now be harnessed for constructive and far-reaching political and social changes for the betterment of the mass of the people of our country. Deadly dangers for our people and democracy lurk around in Britain today. The sinister forces of capitalism work overtime. I think our people can triumph.

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Let every trade unionist participate in the struggle to allow the Labour Party to fulfil its destiny started off by the great trade union movement of Britain's workers.

Do not let us be put off by the cries to capture the so-called 'middle ground'. The professional and middle classes will respond to a bold lead for change. They, too, will need us. We in turn can use their talents for *our needs in Britain*. We all have a common cause in challenging the rule of capitalism. The dynamic, and our strength, will come from the working class in the trade unions. This justifies the claim of the trade unions to have a great say in policy-making and the means by which the policies are operated.

Lenin on the Fight Against War

***Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p.447**

' "We shall retaliate to war by a strike or a revolution"—that is what all the prominent reformist leaders usually say to the working class. And very often the seeming radicalness of the measures proposed satisfies and appeases the workers, co-operators and peasants.'

***Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 447**

'We must explain the real situation to the people, show them that war is hatched in the greatest secrecy, and that the ordinary workers' organisations, even if they call themselves revolutionary organisations, are utterly helpless in face of a really impending war.

'We must explain to the people again and again in the most concrete manner possible how matters stood in the last war, and why they could not have been otherwise.'

***Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 448**

'The masses are not given a really vivid idea of how war may and will creep up on them. On the contrary, every day the dominant press, in an infinite number of copies, obscures this question and weaves such lies around it that the feeble socialist press is absolutely impotent against it, the more so that even in time of peace it propounds fundamentally erroneous views on this point.'

***Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 451**

'On such a question, not only a mistake, but even lack of thoroughness on our part will be unpardonable.'

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THE MUNICH DRAMA (1)

I. M. Maisky

To Academician Ivan Mikhailovitch Maisky, Soviet Ambassador to the United Kingdom, 1923-43.

On the occasion this year of your Golden Wedding Jubilee, and that of Agnia Alexandrovna; in the fortieth year of your appointment as the Ambassador of the USSR to the Court of St James where you sought unremittingly for peace and for the friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union with the peoples of the United Kingdom, we send you our warm fraternal greetings.

It is sixty years since you first arrived in the United Kingdom as a political refugee hunted by the Tsarist police, a penniless third class passenger. Your five years in London till 1917, and thereafter your position as Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy from 1925 to 1927 gave you a knowledge of our people and our country unrivalled by any previous ambassador, and enabled you to play your part as a great diplomatist in carrying out the socialist policies of peace and friendship, not only with Britain but with a whole series of other countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas. In the last fifteen years of your retirement from active life as diplomatist you have in a series of books brushed aside the mythology sedulously built up from the moment of coming to power of the Nazis and the beginnings of the appeasement policy of successive Tory cabinets. You have portrayed, by the medium of your reminiscences, the actual sequence of events so assiduously 'forgotten' by the publicists of the capitalist press as to conceal from the present generation that a British Tory Prime Minister should have sunk so low. You have crowned this gift of a dozen volumes to the historiography of Europe by The Munich Drama* *in which you have retold in a simple but most effective manner the story month after month of that long-drawn-out degradation that preluded the most bloody of all wars in the history of mankind.*

We are persuaded that our many readers above middle age will suffer with intense interest the retelling of what they cannot but remember, while it will be a gift to the majority of our readers to whom these terrible events have never been familiar in their memories. We shall print in each number of this magazine an instalment from your book.

Fifty years ago, in his instructions to the Russian trade union delegates at The Hague International Peace Congress, Lenin wrote 'on the question of combatting the danger of war' that 'the greatest

* *The Munich Drama*, I. Maisky, Novosti Press Agency, 86 pp., 10p.

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difficulty lies in overcoming the prejudice that this is a simple, clear and comparatively easy question.'

Lenin suggested that the real situation could be explained 'relating and analysing what happened during the last war and telling all those present that they are ignorant of this, or pretend that they know about it, but actually shut their eyes to what is the very pivot of the question which must be understood if any real efforts are to be made to combat war.'

By reprinting what you have related so tellingly in The Munich Drama *we hope that this magazine will have played its part at a time when important diplomatic détentes may in some quarters have lulled the vigilance of the fighters for peace. We shall in these next months do what is possible for us to fulfil, and follow this fifty-year-old precept of Lenin.* Editor, *Labour Monthly*

AMONG the many events which finally led to the tragedy of the second world war, Munich occupies a place of its own.

I begin my story with a profile of Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister from 1937 to 1940, who was the principal architect of Munich.

That does not mean, of course, that Neville Chamberlain was solely responsible for the Munich policy in England. The foreign policy of a bourgeois state results from the activities of class forces which find expression through specific groupings and individuals. That was the case with Munich. There were many others acting in the same spirit as Neville Chamberlain on the political scene in Britain—Stanley Baldwin, his predecessor as Prime Minister; Sir John Simon, former Foreign Secretary, who headed one of the most reactionary groups in British ruling circles; Geoffrey Dawson, the extremely influential editor of the *Times*; Kingsley Wood, Samuel Hoare and other cabinet ministers; Lady Astor, with her highly reactionary Cliveden set. . . . Nevertheless, the leader of the social class forces that were then ruling Britain was Neville Chamberlain. Since, for good measure, he had a most energetic and obstinate character, it was he who exerted the greatest influence on British policy at the time.

Who was Neville Chamberlain? And what did he stand for? . . . What kind of man was he?

From all I saw myself and heard from others during my years as Ambassador in London, I arrived at the conclusion that nature had given Neville Chamberlain three principal qualities: a small mind, great energy, and the pigheadedness that stems from a narrow outlook. Such a mixture is highly dangerous in a man at the helm of state, and Neville Chamberlain's activities as a statesman, especially

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in the last period of his life, are undeniable confirmation of this.

Once, as we were talking, Lloyd George said to me: 'What is Neville? In outlook he is just a provincial manufacturer of iron bedsteads!' Churchill was even more outspoken. In private conversations we had, he called Neville 'a fool', and when at the end of the thirties the Prime Minister staked everything on a war breaking out between Nazi Germany and the USSR, Churchill exclaimed: 'What an idiot! He thinks he can ride the tiger!'

According to Anthony Eden, on the eve of Neville's appointment as head of the British Government, Austen Chamberlain warned his brother: 'Neville, you must remember you don't know anything about foreign affairs*.'

My personal impression, throughout the eight years I was obliged to come in contact with Neville Chamberlain in the course of my work, led me to the conclusion that he was an extremely limited individual and totally unfitted for diplomacy. I clearly recollect our first talk, in November 1932, when he was Chancellor. As the newly appointed Ambassador I paid him a courtesy visit. During our conversation various economic matters came up and Chamberlain began to reproach the Soviet Union, claiming that it sold a great deal to Britain but bought little, and used the surplus to place orders in Germany. I replied that the Soviet Government was acting like a good merchant: it was selling where it was profitable to sell and buying where it was advantageous to buy.

'But why do you consider,' Chamberlain asked, 'that it is more advantageous to buy in Germany?'

'There is a very simple reason,' I replied. 'The Germans, unlike yourselves, give us a five-year credit.'

The Chancellor's face suddenly changed. He turned round sharply towards me in his armchair and in a spiteful tone said: 'Do you really want us to give long-term credits to our enemy? No, we can put our money to better use.'

In the same tone as Chamberlain had used I replied: 'I want exactly nothing, Mr Chancellor. I have not come to you for credits at all. . . . You asked me why the Soviet Union placed orders primarily with Germany. I answered you. That was all.'

I must admit that at that moment I was glad that Chamberlain had shown his true colours with such frankness. At any rate, now I knew exactly whom I was dealing with. But as I left the Chancellor's office I involuntarily thought: 'Well, and what a poor diplomat you are!' So my opinion of Neville Chamberlain coincided completely

* *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: Facing the Dictators*, London, 1962, p. 502.

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with that expressed by his brother, although at the time I was not aware of it.

The years that followed only strengthened my first impression. A tall, thin man with a bright patch of silver grey in the black cap of his hair (I do not know whether this was nature or chemistry at work), an uninteresting individual, unsociable, with no talent for oratory, no sense of humour and none of that personal charm so vital to a politician, he was simply the incarnation of unfitness for work in the sphere of foreign affairs.

Furthermore, Neville Chamberlain was extremely conservative and highly dogmatic in thought and deed. Any fresh winds, new currents and forms of life were accepted by him with difficulty. He himself said: 'I am a man of the nineteenth century, when there were no cars or telephones.' Even a fountain pen was an instrument of torture to Chamberlain. His heart was really in business (remember that his father considered him unsuited to politics). Above all, he was a merchant, and when fate thrust him into the position of Prime Minister he was firmly convinced that the best recipe for success in the international sphere was the application of commercial methods to foreign policy.

I recall another curious talk with Neville Chamberlain. About two months after his appointment as Prime Minister I visited him in my capacity as Soviet Ambassador and asked him to inform me of the basic lines of the foreign policy of the Government headed by him. In reply he spent a long time explaining to me in detail that the main problem at the moment was Germany. This question had to be settled first of all, and then the rest would not present any special difficulty. But how was the German problem to be settled? The Prime Minister believed this was quite possible if only the correct method were adopted. The whole point was the method. What had been done by British diplomacy so far was quite unsuitable, and that was why it had been so unsuccessful. Chamberlain was going to change all that, he said. Then, as if thinking aloud, the Prime Minister declared eagerly: 'If only I could sit down at the table with Hitler and with pencil in hand could go through all his complaints and claims, I think this would bring us very close to reconciliation. . . .'

The Prime Minister's ideas on foreign policy were as primitive as that. As I went away I thought once again: 'Well, and what a poor diplomat you make!'

It was a man of such character that the British ruling class put at the head of government at such an extraordinarily crucial moment in history.

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TUC IMPRESSIONS (1)

George Doughty*
General Secretary
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Technical and Supervisory Section)

WHEN the present troubles of the British labour movement and the critical challenges which it now faces pass into history and we reach a more tranquil and rewarding life, the 1972 meeting of the Trades Union Congress will be regarded as one of significance. To all who participated, it had its rewarding moments and its disappointments.

It came as Britain faced a crisis in its economic affairs and in its international role. Capitalism is in crisis—many inevitable problems are upon us: unemployment is rising, costs are escalating, racial tensions are high, and organised labour is under severe pressure.

Unlike the economic crisis of the thirties, when we were involved in a world problem of unemployment, when we had massive labour problems, ineffective resistance to attacks on living standards, from which Fascism emerged, we now have pressure from unions for higher pay, shorter hours and job security. In spite of weaknesses, we have a determined opposition to Government interference in trade union affairs. Attempts to use difficulties to inflame racial problems are being more forcefully opposed by labour in the seventies than was the rise of Fascism in the thirties. Yet we still witness the horror of Vietnam, the sufferings of Northern Ireland, and the passions and murders in the Middle East.

Present-day imperialism, apart from physical occupation as in the case of Angola and Mozambique, is an economic penetration in which the more powerful nations exploit the weaker by economic occupation. This is particularly true in the case of the United States, although far from exclusively so. In spite of Britain's declining influence, it still retains a powerful overseas investment policy. The Dutch also have large overseas investments. The 'defeated' nations—Japan and Germany—due to new equipment and help from the US pose new threats to Britain's old fashioned and inefficient production methods.

Overshadowing all of this is the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community. The new form of economic imperialism has produced the multi-national companies, some of which have a

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budget larger than some European countries. The Common Market will strengthen the position of giants of monopoly capitalism.

The 1972 Congress in its own way and according to its own collective dispositions discussed these matters and reached consensus decisions which were in support of demands for improvements for working conditions and social benefits. The press chose to interpret the ways by which different unions tried to pursue their members' interests in terms of 'right' and 'left'. They are unable to understand what is going on and what most people want. They practise an old trick of reporting, not unlike some of the nasty appeals now being made for racial discrimination.

This was nowhere better demonstrated than in the reporting of the efforts of the Congress to deal with the Industrial Relations Act. Suspending unions who refuse to abide by Congress policies is to be regretted. No one wants to see the Congress fragmenting. Many will return to the TUC, and those who don't will now have made that decision themselves.

I think Congress took a step backward in its decisions on the Industrial Relations Act. Nevertheless, there is enough left in present Congress policy of resistance to the Act to prevent it operating as the Government would want. The dockers and the miners showed the way.

Congress decided to remove political discrimination within its own ranks; to oppose the Common Market; to tackle the multi-nationals; and to oppose apartheid. The resolution on unemployment and the economy was like the proverbial curate's egg. I thought that a more positive statement could have been made about Vietnam.

All in all, however, it was a good Congress. It dealt with the main issues of the day, and its decisions were firmly on the side of a constructive approach. My most favourable recollection was the fraternal address from the Canadian delegate. My most distasteful one—and I am sorry to have to say so—was a delegate's reference to 'skinning the onion'.

National Union of Mineworkers—Derbyshire Area

Greetings to Delegates attending the 1972 Labour Party Conference
Our aim must be for the return of a Labour Government

Miners' Offices
Saltergate, Chesterfield

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TUC IMPRESSIONS (2)

Arthur Sier*

THE Trades Union Congress discussions and decisions can only be judged upon criteria that are objective. Will they advance the interests of the organised working class? Are they in accord with the possibilities that the current political and economic situation offer us?

There can be no doubt that, on most matters discussed, the right decisions were taken: on economic policy, Common Market, education, housing, health, industrial safety, trade union democracy, and others. If these policies are fought for, then not only will the immediate interests of the workers be safeguarded, but an advance will be made in their political understanding.

The great weakness of Congress was the defeat of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW) composite motion on the Industrial Relations Act. This motion demanded a complete opposition to the Act. It stressed that no use should be made of the machinery of the courts for either defensive or offensive purposes, and further proposed that a common fund should be set up to assist any union that suffered damages as a result of carrying out such a policy.

Congress had on its first day shown its solidarity and opposition to the Act by suspending those unions that had not de-registered. On the AUEW motion, however, the cleavage between those who wanted to fight the Act, and those who did not, was clear. The argument was successfully advanced that to go to the National Industrial Relations Court in 'self-defence' was an obligation in order to defend one's members, and was also a form of conducting the fight. One speaker argued that going to the courts is a 'tactical question', and that it is an error to elevate 'tactics' to the level of a principle. In that he is of course quite right, but in my view he was quite wrong in this case, since the issue is not a tactical one. It is a matter of principle.

This Act is not going to be defeated merely by de-registering and then going off to the courts whenever we are under attack. That position is not a tenable one and it implies that trade unionists can only be defended in that way: an amazing argument to hear after the experiences of the imprisonment and subsequent release of the five dockers!

Had the AUEW motion been carried out, and then acted upon, I

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* Arthur Sier is an executive member of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, and was a delegate to the TUC.

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am convinced that a tremendous working class advance would have been achieved. It is true that some union establishments would find such a situation extremely uncomfortable (so might some Labour Party leaders), but is it not time that trade unionism should lead to something more advanced than trade unionism?

It has been clear ever since the Upper Clyde ship workers affair that a new and militant mood has swept the working class. The Congress decision not to accept the AUEW motion is not in accord with that mood. The possibilities now exist to do more than merely struggle to maintain our present living standards. What an advance it was to see important motions passed that did not only state a position, but insisted upon action being taken. The tide is going in our direction—let us take advantage of it.

BEREAVED—REJECTED—DEPRIVED

*The emotional and educational experience of the West Indian adolescent immigrant in Britain**

Jane King

LAST year, while I was studying for my diploma in the Education of Maladjusted Children, there appeared a very angry, and important, document entitled *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System.* Its author was a young West Indian educationalist, Bernard Coard, who had taught for two years in educationally subnormal (ESN) schools in east London.

This publication was of particular interest to me for a number of reasons: first of all because my own experience has led me to reject as both unscientific and inhuman all theories which promote belief in the inherent intellectual superiority or inferiority of any race or class; secondly because I knew that this year I should be taking over the organisation of a department in a college of further education where there was a concentration of newly arrived West Indian adolescents; and thirdly because, as part of my course at the Institute of Education, I was, under the supervision of the local child guidance

* Transcript of a talk given in June 1972 to a one-day Conference of Further Education Lecturers, Careers Advisors and Social and Community Relations Workers who met to discuss the educational and employment problems of the recently arrived West Indian immigrant student in further education colleges in the London area.

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clinic, administering remedial education-cum-counselling to two educationally backward, 'problem' West Indian boys.

The elder of these two boys was a student at our college. He had arrived from Jamaica, 15 years old, after a separation of 13 years from his mother (he had no father) to rejoin his family in a council flat on an overcrowded, dilapidated estate. He was illiterate, tongue-tied, almost incomprehensible, subject to violent and unpredictable outbursts, during one of which he had inflicted with a penknife, a wound, which required stiches, upon the arm of a West Indian girl in his class. He was suspended from college, but reinstated on condition that he saw me at least once a week for remedial help.

In fact we saw one another twice and sometimes three times a week for at least an hour each time. We did some reading, letter writing—to grandmother, and friends in Jamaica, some typing (a very valuable ego-building exercise for one who has not learnt to write by the age of 15), but we spent much more of our time together talking, walking, shopping, communicating at all sorts of levels. During these sessions I learnt a very great deal about the problems which produce the scandalous situation described in the document to which I have referred.

According to the Inner London Education Authority Report 657, in 1966 the proportion of immigrant children in the Authority's area in ordinary schools was 13.2 per cent. In educationally subnormal schools it was 23.3 per cent. In 1967 the proportions had risen to 15 per cent and 28.4 per cent respectively. Of these 28.4 per cent (about 1,166 children in ESN schools), 75 per cent were West Indian, 4 per cent Indian and Pakistani, 13 per cent Cypriot, and 8 per cent 'other'. Only the West Indian children were more highly represented as a percentage of the whole immigrant population in ESN schools than in ordinary schools. And this was by the staggering figure of 21 per cent.

If you make a tour of the maladjusted schools in London, as I was able to do last year, you will find a disproportionate number of West Indian boys there also. If, however, you visit any of the very special, psycho-analytically orientated residential schools for the specially intelligent and gifted maladujsted child, you will be unlikely to find a single black face there. And the West Indians are the least likely group to be found in grammar schools.

It is easy to conclude that there must be something in what Jensen and Eysenk and Powell are saying. And if one uses merely sociological arguments in defence of the backwardness, the lethargy, the immature, noisy and sometimes uncontrolled behaviour of the West Indian

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young person in college, one is often met with the reasonable reply that many of our indigenous school population also suffer from poor housing, loss of a parent, overcrowded classrooms, rising prices; that their needs are as great, and, it is often implied, their deserts are greater, since they and their parents were born here.

If one then points to the depressing and frustrating effects of problems of colour and communication, the answer is that there are other races, Indians and Pakistanis for example, who seem to have overcome the problems—at least they stay out of ESN schools and maladjusted schools, and even rise to the top streams, if not in grammar schools at any rate in comprehensive schools.

We have always had in our GCE (General Certificate of Education) Department students from all over the world, living thousands of miles from their families, speaking very inadequate English, who have nevertheless made good grades, especially in mathematics and science subjects, and gone on to take good degrees. And there have been children of immigrant families—a Sikh boy, a Nigerian girl and many others—who, after an unimpressive start, have eventually collected enough Os and As (ordinary and advanced level GCE) to proceed to higher education. But these have been children who, while subjected to the 'culture shock' of moving from one country, language and education system to another, have still had, in their early years, the support of a stable family unit. They have not been subjected to certain other much more damaging shocks. . . .

When I went through the entry forms for our West Indian students I found that, of the 32, nine girls were not in fact newly arrived; they had come to us from ESN schools, but they, like the recent arrivals who had received all their secondary education in the West Indies, had been separated from their mothers and other members of the family for many years before they were sent for—between the ages of 11 and 13. The Department of Education and Science *Education Survey 13*, 1971, has a very perceptive paragraph on the difficulties of immigrant schoolchildren:

> They may experience a more complex form of deprivation than the native-born child as they stand bewildered between two cultures. Not only may their difficulties be greater, they are also different—need different responses, requiring sensitivity and care based on understanding. Their education must involve social, cultural and emotional adjustments of a special kind.

In most of the literature, however, the emphasis is upon the difficulties experienced as a result of inadequate language, of 'culture shock', of the differences in educational standards and curricular approaches.

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There is also a great deal of talk of the need for appropriate methods of assessment to give some idea of the immigrant pupil's abilities, aptitudes and achievements. But no such methods have so far been developed for the West Indian child. In the *Report from the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration*, 1969, there is a significant suggestion (para. 113):

> It would be beneficial if it were explained to intending immigrants, either in their country of origin or on their arrival in this country, that a long delay in sending for their children would be much against the best interests of those children.

How many British people, let alone intending West Indian immigrants, have heard of the work of Spock, Bowlby, the Robertsons and others on the importance of the mother-child relationship in the early years, of the effects of separation, loss and mourning? How many of the researchers for these official reports are fully aware of how severely a child's whole development, intellectual and emotional, can be affected by the sudden loss of a parent, either by death or separation, in early childhood?

In the case of our West Indian immigrant students you have to add to this shock the further distress caused at a time which is a particularly vulnerable on in all cultures—puberty and adolescence—of a *second separation* (this time in a strange and often hostile environment) from the grandparents who have raised them: 'Don't you no dot I love you. you are my mother and my father and I love you and I want to come back,' wrote the 15-year-old boy I mentioned earlier. He was writing his first letter to his grandmother since his arrival in England. It was almost a year since he had left her and he was just beginning to read and write. In a letter to me his grandmother wrote: 'Yes mam I know he mist me. is me who grow him. he just know his mother, but Is his mother.' And to him:

> Hollow my dear son you bet I feel happy tonight when I open and see my little Ronie [his photograph] but why you vex so? I kiss you every minute, now try behave yourself to your mother and you will reach the gold. out here is not good again, I wish I could come. put your hand to your lesson and let your mother feel nice poor thing she fret over you very much. but you vex, kiss your dear self and be happy Ronie. I send love, your loving mother.

Perhaps because he was so young, only two years old, when his mother left, Ronie reacted more violently than most to this second separation. His mother's departure had been followed at intervals of several years by the departure for England first of his elder brother,

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then of his sister—the only one besides his grandmother who could understand his tongue-tied speech. When he arrived here, many years after the others, there was a seven-year-old half-sister, the apple of his mother's eye, whom he had never seen before. His mother was so disappointed in him, so ashamed of his illiteracy, that she wanted to disown him entirely. For months he stayed at home to mind the house and his young sister, while his mother was out working. Later, when he came to college and received a small grant for pocket money, she denied him food. She has never ceased to implore us and the social services to 'take him away'. This desperate situation, which makes Ronie's education a very slow and frustrating process, could scarcely have been prevented by telling his mother before she set off for England that she must send for him as soon as possible. The economic realities of immigration make these separations, however undesirable, inevitable.

Fifteen of our 32 students this year are from one-parent families, and mother is the parent in every case. Many of these mothers came over alone seeking a better life (the 'gold' of the grandmother's letter) in London, where jobs *were* easier to get and better paid. They intended to bring their children over in due course for the better education which would lead to qualifications, security and social status impossible to achieve at home. Some came with their man but lost him or left him later. Whatever the circumstances it is not difficult to imagine the struggles of a black woman, however intelligent, to earn enough to feed, clothe and house herself in London, send money home to her mother to keep the grandchildren she is caring for, and save for their eventual passage to England and a place big enough to house them when they arrive. Which of us, white and qualified, would not take years to do it?

(*In the next issue Jane King will describe the way in which the pressures upon immigrant parents and their adolescent children affect the ability to learn, and the ways in which the college where she teaches is seeking to resolve the educational problems created by this situation.*—Ed. *LM*)

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THEORIES OF ALIENATION

Clemens Dutt

NOT so long ago the usual attitude of academic circles towards Marxism was still one of contemptuous dismissal. Nowadays that has largely changed. Economists, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, vie with one another in hailing Marx as a fundamental source and supporter for their own particular theories. From this point of view they are ready to accord Marx a place of importance in history, although when they come to consider Marx's theory as a whole they mostly try to demolish it root and branch on philosophical or economic grounds, as is the case with the current popular exponents of linguistic philosophy, such as Popper or Ayer, or subject it to more or less superficial criticism, such as Professor Tucker's views on Marx as a religious thinker. A book by Professor Ollman published last year by New York University deserves some serious attention because it does not fall into either of these two categories. He has chosen the word 'alienation', now so much in vogue, for his title*, but although he maintains that Marx's theory of alienation affords the indispensable means for understanding the structure of Marxism as a whole, the major part of the book is not so much a treatise on alienation as an attempt to convey the integral unity of all aspects of Marx's theory, basing himself on a thorough study of everything Marx wrote. The value of the book therefore lies in the fact that the author does not use Marx's writings as a peg to propound his own ideas as to what Marx 'really meant', but deals with what Marx actually said.

All this, however, does not make this book the best, or even an adequate, guide to Marxism. In his early works Marx used the concept of alienation to analyse capitalism and the position of the proletariat under it. In its simplest form, alienation denoted that at a definite stage in the development of society, depending on private property and the division of labour, the products made by man and the process of his activity became something independent of him and dominating over him. This phenomenon can appear in a variety of more complicated forms. But to make the theory of alienation the sole clue to the whole of Marxism, the key to understanding the whole of social development itself, and such aspects of it as the class struggle, the state, and the labour theory of value, not to speak of

* *Alienation, Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, Bertell Ollman, Central University Press (Cambridge University Press), 326 pp., £4.

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the revolutionary role of Marxism, tends to result in a kind of psychological interpretation of Marxism of the sort that made a theory of human alienation derived originally from Marx the basis for the idealist bourgeois philosophy of existentialism.

Ollman's book has three main sections: 1) the philosophical foundations of Marxism, 2) Marx's conception of human nature, 3) Marx's theory of alienation. The first section is devoted to analysing what he calls Marx's 'peculiar use of language'. He finds linguistically 'startling' and obscure Marx's statement that under certain circumstances theory becomes a 'material force', although ordinary people may find it a simple and enlightening statement of fact. His aim is to show that what various critics have condemned as Marx's apparently loose terminology and inconsistency in the formulation of concepts is due to viewing things as relations, and society as consisting of social relations which are not fixed but changing. In this connection he defends Marx's use of concepts taken from Hegel but endowed with fresh meaning and without Hegel's idealist content, and quotes approvingly Lenin's remark that it is impossible completely to understand Marx's *Capital* without having thoroughly studied and understood the whole of Hegel's *Logic*. He shows also how Marx's dialectical view of relations exposes the fallacious descriptions of Marxism as economic determinism or as fundamentalism.

The second section has little direct mention of alienation, but devotes much space to Marx's view of man's nature as a human being and a social being, and goes on to consider various aspects such as creative activity, freedom, classes and people. This paves the way for treating the theory of alienation as the 'grand summing up' of Marx's conception of man in capitalist society. It may be noted that in his very first introductory remarks Ollman declares that Marx's 'theory of alienation places the individual in the centre. . . his conditions become an extension of who he is and what he does rather than the reverse.' This formulation seems to come dangerously near to contradicting Marx's famous and fundamental dictum that social being determines social consciousness and not the other way round. So much has been written about Marx's theory of alienation that there is no need to dwell on Ollman's exposition, which treats it under the four broad headings, namely man's relation to his productive activity, to his product, to his fellow-men, and to his species, used by Marx in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, from which in fact Ollman takes most of his account. However, in mentioning that Marx's theory of alienation has been dealt with in many recent works, notably the book by Meszaros, *Marx's*

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Theory of Alienation (although the name of Meszaros is unaccountably missing from the index), Ollman comments that 'in virtually all such works the theory of alienation is used to help explain communism rather than the reverse.' Once again it looks as if Ollman wants to put the cart before the horse. Moreover, while correctly pointing out that Marx did not abandon the concept of alienation in his later works, including *Capital*, and refuting those who find a change in general outlook between the younger and older Marx, he fails to indicate that in these later works Marx replaces this concept by a whole system of new concepts to describe capitalist production relations, in which, however, alienation still appears. Ollman has a good deal to say on the central theme of Marx's theory of value which he treats with particular reference to alienation.

Incidentally, he makes some rather curious statements, such as that the capitalist worker produces some articles which are only suitable for alienated societies, 'such as locks of all kinds, guns, advertisements and churches'. Commenting on the many critics of Marx's theory of value, he states that this remains a closed book for those economists who have not understood the theory of alienation, and caustically remarks that 'immersed as they are in capitalist assumptions . . . no one is less qualified to grasp the unique contribution of Marxian economics than the economists.' In this section, too, there is much of interest and value in Ollman's detailed presentation of Marx's account of class, the state and religion, described from the angle of the alienation theory.

The book ends with a short concluding section which the author calls a 'critical evaluation'. Here the cloven hoof of bourgeois scholarship begins to reveal itself. Already one has a suspicion that the revolutionary role of Marxism has somehow disappeared under the weight of all this theory. After all, Marx said in his famous theses on Feuerbach, and Lenin acted on it, although this finds no mention in this book, that 'the philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways, the point is to change it.' Ollman could also take to heart Engels's explanation why the great work *The German Ideology* was never published: 'We had no wish to propound these new scientific criticisms in ponderous tomes for the edification of professional wiseacres. . . . We had both of us entered bag and baggage into the political movement.' Throughout Ollman is careful to say 'Marx says', 'Marx maintains', without committing himself other than as an expositor. Coming then to Ollman's final critical evaluation, it is characteristic that he finds the fundamental weakness of Marx's theory in the commonplace objection that it fails to reckon

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with the fact that people act irrationally. He reinforces this hackneyed criticism that Marx paid insufficient attention to psychological factors by contributing the idea that Marx overlooked the importance of sexual repressions in adding to the irrationality of all classes. In general he stresses that changes in people's character lag behind changes in their condition of life. He asserts 'if Marx had studied the family more closely, he would have noticed that as a factory for producing character it is invariably a generation or more behind the times.' Therefore, he concludes, 'if workers bring to their conditions a character structure that keeps them from reacting to these conditions in a rational manner, all efforts to attain widespread class consciousness are doomed to failure.' However, to offset this banal pessimism, he says that there are some events 'tending to alter the character structure of the working class young'. Ollman's final psychological criticism is that acceptance of the theory of alienation involves sharing with Marx certain basic beliefs, so that, if one denies that capitalists are inherently selfish, 'a major pillar on which the theory of alienation rests has been removed.' Where now is the great edifice of objective social reality which one might have supposed Ollman was concerned to defend by his description? All in all, therefore, one cannot but conclude that it is more rewarding to study Marx's own writings than to depend on all this array of scholarly interpretation.

BOOKS

Left, Left, Left
Peggy Duff
Allison & Busby, 278 pp., £2.80

PEGGY DUFF's name was a household word in the great days of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. She emerges in this book as a professional campaigner, committed, energetic, shrewd; the by no means uncritical follower of the campaign leaders. She describes a number of campaigns, so the campaign leaders include Acland and Gollancz in Commonwealth (an almost forgotten episode of left history); Bevan and the Bevanites, on Tribune; above all and at considerable length, Canon Collins and Bertrand Russell, respectively chairman and president of the earlier CND.

Her admiration for Bevan is deep, but falls short of idolatry. 'He was often autocratic. He was neither a great innovator, nor, I think, a great thinker. He did nothing to enlarge the boundaries of socialism. He made no contribution to socialist thought. He spoke better than he wrote. . . .' (p. 76). An earlier reference to Bevan completes the summing up: 'The possibilities of swinging the Party behind himself and the Bevanites had failed by 1957. He thought there could be no progress at all if Labour remained in opposition. So he accepted at last the leadership of the man he

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disliked so bitterly (i.e. Gaitskell, the "desiccated calculating machine" Bevan had called him) in the interests of the Party he loved. He parted with the left, and his defence of the bomb at the 1957 conference sealed the new coalition (Bevan-Gaitskell). I think he was wrong.' It is a charitable view of Bevan's right-about-turn.

The story of CND is told with liveliness and affection. She is critical of the campaign machine, its establishment, as she calls it (she was its servant and saw it from the inside), and is illuminating on the umbrella theory which Russell favoured and the Canon disliked, whereby the campaign set up no restrictive conditions and made itself open to all trends: the direct actionists and the simple marchers, the Christians, the youth, the universities, and the labour movement in all its diversity. In this nostalgic backward glance, even the anarchists are seen through rosy-coloured spectacles.

Her contempt for the leading personnel of the Labour Party, and this includes all the cabinet of Harold Wilson, and many of those she refers to as Bevan's Second XI, so very many of whom became rightists as alluring careers called them, is something forthright and refreshing. It would be too much to expect that she should ask herself why these betrayals took place. As the dreadful realities of the Vietnam war pushed 'Ban the Bomb' from the centre of the stage, she shows some understanding of the shrinking of the grip of CND on its earlier enthusiasts.

There is a lot to criticise in this book, not least the deep pessimism of the closing chapter 'What's Left?' where she sees no prospects. All is black (and this was written in 1971!). I wonder if 1972, with the fight of the miners, the railwaymen, the dockers and the UCS shipyards has given Peggy more cheering perspectives?

Lively, attractive, shrewd and sincere, and well worth the reading. Her confidence in the immense fighting initiative of ordinary people is the saving grace of this provoking, irritating and endearing account, and it will help future historians to understand what made the sixties tick.

BEN AINLEY

Servants of God or Masters of Men?
Victor Daniel Bonilla
Penguin, 304 pp., 60p

THE STORY OF ATTEMPTS dating from those of the Spanish conquistadores, the Capuchin missionaries of this century, to the alliance of church and state of the present day to 'civilise and christianise' a group of Indians in a pleasant and isolated valley in Columbia, ought to be fascinating. The material is fascinating and at times almost incredible, presented by an author who is very much on the side of the Indians. The book has already become a most useful weapon in the fight to stop the brutal destruction of these people. There are many lengthy footnotes, and long quotations from contemporary documents interspersed in the text produce a disjointed account, making reading an effort rather than a pleasure. But the effort is worth it.

The Catholic Church administration and its servants who are the subject of the question 'Servants of God or Masters of Men?' are seen clearly as having been as cruel and rapacious as any secular administration, whatever the good intentions of some. The book serves as a powerful reminder of the traditional role of the church as a mainstay of imperialism—a role which has changed or adapted only where change has been carried through by progressives both inside and outside its structure.

MARGARET GOODWIN

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POSTAL CUTBACK

WE fear that our Fund figure for August has been affected by a Post Office fault, namely that a whole delivery of post to the *LM* office 'went astray' on the first day of that month. Two expected contributions from regular donors have not reached us, and we have had enquiries from readers whose subscription renewals and orders for the August issue have clearly gone the same way. To add to the injury, the Post Office has told one reader who applied for a refund on a missing postal order that she will have to wait *six months*.

Having increased the postage rates on the pretext of providing better service, the Government has now got a lot to answer for: the postal service has for many purposes worsened (though service to the largest commercial firms may now be 'the best in the world'). And why? Because funds are not provided to pay a decent wage to postal workers, a living wage without overtime enforcing long hours, a wage that would attract more workers with the qualifications needed in this important public sector. A change—that's what we want.

Labour Monthly's Brighton Discussion Group wrote, in a letter that did reach us, to say that their average attendance at monthly meetings during the first year of their existence has been 10 readers, and sometimes as many as 15 have been present. Their Secretary reports: 'We guaranteed the sale of 10 copies a month to start with, and for the first few months members of the Group had to make up the amount of the guarantee. Now we have made our guarantee 15 which we sell out. We also sell back numbers, which gives us a little extra for our funds.'

Speakers have been booked by the Group for every meeting to the end of the year, having accepted the challenge of speaking on the 'Notes of the Month' whatever the theme turns out to be. They want to help form other groups in the area, and have in mind Crawley, Eastbourne and Hastings. Any reader interested should write to Ernest Trory, 57 Tivoli Crescent, Brighton, BN1 5NB. Can we also hear from any other groups that are functioning?

Nicola Seyd

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Socialism and Culture, edited by Y. Surovtsev. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 382 pp., £1.

The Path of Valour, S. Budyonny. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 444 pp., £1.25.

Collected Letters 1898-1910, Bernard Shaw. Max Reinhardt, 1,018 pp., £6.

Hegel's Theory of the Modern State, Shlomo Avineri. Cambridge University Press, 252 pp., £3.40.

Gomulka—His Poland and his Communism, Nicholas Bethell. Penguin, 308 pp., 50p.

Red Star Over China, Edgar Snow. Penguin, 622 pp., £1.

Oil and World Power, Peter R. Odell. Penguin, 178 pp., 50p.

India's China War, Neville Maxwell. Penguin, 546 pp., £1.

The Face of the Third Reich, Joachim C. Fest. Penguin, 608 pp., 80p.

Because They're Black, Derek Humphrey and Gus John. Penguin, 204 pp., 35p.

On Historical Materialism, Marx, Engels and Lenin. Lawrence & Wishart, 752 pp., £2.

The Lawbreakers, Roy Jenkins. Penguin, 64 pp., 30p.

Break for Commercials, E. Rudinger and Vic Kelly. Penguin, 48 pp., 30p.

European Unity—A Return to Realities?, G. Goodwin. Leeds University Press 24 pp., 18p.

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